

I have been on record as warning the Federal Communications Commission and its Chairman, Michael Powell, of the dangers of media consolidation; however, I have consistently felt that my warnings have fallen upon deaf and unreceptive ears. Sinclair Broadcasting, and its decision to force its 62 television stations, covering some 40% of the national viewing audience, to air an anti-Kerry "documentary" just days before the election is a clear case in point.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. Contrary to that mandate, the public interest is not being served, either on the local or the national level, by the scheduled broadcast of a biased and politically charged "documentary" just days before the coming election. In fact, one-sided commentary which is being disguised as news is a deplorable exploitation of our Freedom of the Press.

In light of Sinclair's actions, it is clear that media ownership rules must be strengthened. At the time of license renewals, I respectfully request that Sinclair's requests be denied for all of their properties, including my local ABC affiliate - WGGB in Springfield (MA), unless local station management is given total freedom to exercise its own decisions regarding the broadcast of news and commentary in a manner which reflects local public interest within their respective markets.